GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6526
ANSWERED ON:07.05.2003
SNAPPING RAIL ROAD LINK WITH PAKISTAN
KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India unsuccessfully tried to persuade Pakistan to resume rail freight traffic between the two countries after it was snapped following the terrorist attack on Indian Parliament;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether unofficial level trade is taking place between the two countries; and

(d) if so, the volumes thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a)to(d) On 21st December, 2001, Government announced termination of Samjhauta Express and Delhi-Lahore bus service with effect from 1st January, 2002. The decision was taken following the December 13 attack on India`s Parliament and Pakistan`s continued sponsorship of cross border terrorism. Restrictions did not apply to the movement of railway freight traffic. However, Pakistan has since then not permitted interchange between the Indian and Pakistani Railways required for the flow of railway freight traffic. Government had sought a clarification from Pakistan about its intentions regarding freight traffic. Although Pakistan conveyed that the competent authorities had approved the movement of railway freight traffic, in reality no such movement of freight has been permitted by it since the last week of December, 2001.